

Series: Everyone Gets to Play	Reference: Mark 2:1-3, Luke 11:1, Luke 10:1-11	Title: Ready, Willing & Able?	Date: 09.16.18
<p style="text-align: center;">Website Writeup:</p> <p>Are you listening to the Master Teacher, emulating ministry? Do you want your own stories of kingdom life & ministry among others? Do you want to see your witness validated by the Spirit of God moving in peoples lives through healing, be it emotional, spiritual, or physical? Six:Eight does! We want everyone to play in the kingdom of God, all ministers of Christ's healing message & life to others!</p>			

Color changes in text indicate slide changes

Mark 2:1-3, A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ²They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them.

People pressing in to hear Jesus preach the word! Imagine Jesus here now, preaching, room packed, some of us at his feet, listening. What was he teaching? Did he quote Moses, Deuteronomy, Ecclesiastes, who knows? Was he engaging? Go long? Did people fall asleep like they did for Paul, or some of you do for me? Did he use humor? Illustrations? Would you be enthralled, or thinking, "Wish Jason was preaching?"

You know the story, these guys show up with a paralyzed friend, so crowded they dig a hole in the roof, lower him down. Seeing their faith, Jesus forgives the man's sin, which caught the crooked eye of the 'teachers of the law' who're thinking, "Who can forgive sin but God alone?" Legitimate question. Without prompting, Jesus asked, "*Which is easier: to say to this paralyzed man, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat & walk?'*" Obviously, it's easier to say the words, but the man did get up & walk, healed; the authority & divinity of Jesus confirmed.

Jesus' ministry wasn't limited to preaching a message. Not an intellectual one-upmanship of who knows more theology. But...he obviously didn't neglect the teaching/preaching ministry of the Word. His ministry was holistic, calling his disciples into a kingdom lifestyle, through preaching of the Word & the healing of people.

Becoming a Christian doesn't automatically prepare us for Kingdom living. We don't intuitively know how to do these things & be like Jesus in all situations. There's no digital downloaded, like Morpheus plugging Neo into the Matrix, downloading the martial arts to instantly be able to fight. Ministry's a learned practice; lifestyle, taught, caught & practiced over time. It takes knocks. We go a round in life's ring, then sit in the corner with Jesus as he teaches us how to keep our guard up next time. Boxers don't sit in the corner while the trainer fights. Yes, we've watched them do it, learned from their example, then they shove us out into the ring to know victory & defeat learning all the while.

Ministry's a process fraught with mistake & failure, with opposition & challenge to our insecurities & sense of safety. Being in His presence, teachable & actively ready to learn from Jesus is the ongoing informational & experiential tool in becoming great ministers of Kingdom life in others. Becoming like Jesus. Doing what Jesus did. Ready for opportunity. Willing to engage. Spiritually alert. Growing in our ability to minister life & healing to those Jesus brings in our path. Jesus as coach leading us as we engage in the ring of life. Spiritual formation birthing active kingdom-minded disciples.

And, ***Jesus Teaches His Disciples This Way Of Life*** - in Luke 11:1 we read, *One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples."* A willingness & eagerness to learn...he was patient to teach, despite the disciples being a motley crew.

Fishermen, tax collectors, zealots - not an optimal mix for a kickstarter movement. It was probably volatile among the 12 - some on opposite sides of the political spectrum. Zealots lived up to their name, intense people. Peter, the hothead, cuts off a guy's ear in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus had patience to teach them.

Three were closest to him; John, James & Peter. He spent more time with these three, the ones he called deeper into the Garden of Gethsemane as close friends in a difficult moment. They later took on significant leadership roles in the early church. He poured himself into these guys. That circle expanded to the 12, including these three, all doing life with Jesus, listening to direction, watching him do ministry.

Even they, after being with him so long, often made mistakes. Peter denied him three times & Jesus later restored him on the beach. When the Holy Spirit came upon these disciples at Pentecost, there was massive change. Boldness. Power. All thought of self gone as they're now consumed with kingdom ministry! They took on his power. His heart. All but one martyred for their faith in the end. No longer were the careers of fishing, tax-collecting & political positions of zealotry their main concern - now it was God's kingdom. They'd become like Jesus, caring, teaching, preaching the word, apostolic, evangelistic & prophetic in their ministry to others; trainees turned trainers.

All a result of being in His presence; exemplifying a desire to learn from him & take on his heart, "Teach us Jesus," and He did.

Jesus Plans To Extend His Ministry - He didn't wait until Pentecost to begin training people, it was happening all along. He had more followers than just the 12. He sent out 72 in *Luke 10:1-11...After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others & sent them two by two ahead of him to every town & place where he was about to go. ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.*

⁵“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ ⁶If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay there, eating & drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

⁸“When you enter a town & are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. ⁹Heal the sick who are there & tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ ¹⁰But when you enter a town & are not welcomed, go into its streets & say, ¹¹‘Even the dust of your town we wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God has come near.’

In Luke 9 he'd sent out the 12 disciples with the same instruction, now He's sending out 72, commissioning them to *experience & extend* His kingdom ministry.

They had two assignments; preach the kingdom of God & heal the sick. They're able to do this since they'd watched him model it, and Jesus gave them power & the right to exercise that power over the demonic realm & physical disease. Jesus had just shown His power over both of these realms in Luke 8 in calming the storm, restoring a demon-possessed man, raising a dead girl & healing a sick woman - all following again, His teaching on the Kingdom of God. Their healing ministry was to authenticate their preaching ministry like his did. The fact that the disciples healed in Jesus' authority & power showed, He was the Messiah who could usher in the kingdom. People's hospitality to these men would reveal their openness to receiving the message they brought.

People who believed the message & messianic healings would be glad to share with the disciples. If a town rejected them, they were to shake the dust from their feet. When Jews returned from a Gentile country, they'd shake the dust off their feet to signify certain Jews were like Gentiles who refused to believe. Jesus was giving the entire area opportunity to believe His message & mission through this preaching & healing ministry.¹

John Wimber, one of the founders of the Vineyard, in reading the New Testament was convicted, he wasn't living this way. He decided to begin praying healing over people - he prayed for 200 people...nothing! Let me ask, have you ever even prayed over one person directly, let alone 200? Have you even prayed over 200 in your lifetime? Then a woman came to him & asked for healing prayer, he did it reluctantly, not thinking anything would happen, but it did! He'd been practicing. Something moved. Suddenly John had a vibrant healing ministry which validated his message! Don't we want that?

The disciples were practicing. Emulating. Like John Wimber, it wasn't perfect because... ***Jesus Uses An Imperfect Church!*** 2 Cor. 5:18-19, ¹⁸*All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ & gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that*

¹ John A. Martin, "[Luke](#)," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 228.

God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Even now, we live to partner with Jesus' reconciling work in the world, an imperfect Church living in the tension of the already & the not yet. We see the Apostles later in Acts, filled with the Spirit, doing kingdom ministry in power - they'd taken on his ministry! Stephen's stoned to death preaching Christ to the masses, initiating a diaspora of the Church to minister Christ farther & wider! Paul's letters urge churches to spiritual formation in Christ & for ministry among people. We see him witnessing to the Areopagus in Athens. Ministry's passed down to generations through the ages. Our kids are watching how we do it, learning from us (or not) of how we care for our neighbors (or not) & minister Jesus' to them (or not). We're tasked with the ministry of reconciliation! We must be ready, willing & able to go out & take risks in faith to see that happen.

Let's hear a story of three people who've been doing kingdom ministry here at Six:Eight (Elysia, Lindley & Rachel about Elysia's neighbor).

You never know what God's doing in someone's life. I'm familiar with many of your stories. God's using us, life situations & his Word to bring people to Himself. I heard Christy & Chucks story this week. I know Vinny & Mary's, the Masseys & many others. Just last week a woman told me how God had been speaking to her & when she heard TJ preach a few weeks back, things just fell into place. She found herself a week later visiting family in the Lehigh Valley at a church who invited anyone who wanted to come up & be baptized - she did. God's moving all around us, wanna be involved? To have our own stories immortalized in history of how we participated in the kingdom of God?

Eph. 2:10, For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. He's placing people in our path. The need may not be evident until we engage them, ask questions, pray for them, listening to the Holy Spirit's lead on how to bring them closer into his presence. We're God's workmanship, becoming a ready, willing & able community of ministers of reconciliation. Are you ready to welcome the Spirit to empower you for the task?

"Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat & walk?'" It's easier to say the words, but the man got up & walked; the authority, divinity & power of Jesus confirmed, validated & revealed! We want that kind of ministry here at Six:Eight expanding God's Kingdom in our community, despite our imperfect efforts in practicing it - because faith is spelled, R.I.S.K.